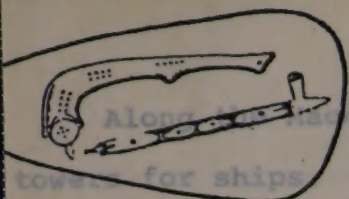


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NATIONAL INDIAN BROTHERHOOD

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towers for ships. In the past, clearing brush around the towers was done manually, providing jobs for the Dene in the area. This spring the Canadian Coast Guard made plans to do away with the jobs of the Dene brush cutters. The Coast Guard has devised a scheme to use herbicides to kill the plants.

The Mackenzie River, its tributaries, and the surrounding land are a major source of food for the Dene in the area. The Mackenzie has always been the life-blood of the Dene. Nevertheless, the Coast Guard was intent on using a very poisonous herbicide which would endanger the lives and livelihood of the Dene who have depended on the River system as long as anyone can remember. The herbicides to be used were Estemine Brush Killer and Pimato AP55.

SPRAYING DEATH AND DESTRUCTION

The Dene were concerned. Research was conducted by the National Indian Brotherhood and the Dene Nation in their battle to preserve the environment. The NIB discovered that 2,4,5-T, only one of the herbicides to be used, was incredibly dangerous.

DAN GRAY

2,4,5-T (2,4,5 - trichlorophenoxyacetic acid) is a key ingredient of the infamous "Agent orange" used extensively during the Vietnam War. The United States Government dumped tons of it over the land and people of Vietnam in an attempt to remove cover for the Vietnamese guerillas. Unfortunately there has apparently been increases in birth defects and cancer amongst the exposed people. Even three years after the spraying stopped, dioxin, a very poisonous contaminant of 2,4,5-T, was found in such high concentrations in the fish caught in Vietnam, they were refused

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Along the Mackenzie River there are several hundred navigation towers for ships. In the past, clearing brush around the towers was done manually, providing jobs for the Dene in the area. This spring the Canadian Coast Guard made plans to do away with the jobs of the Dene brush cutters. The Coast Guard has devised a scheme to use herbicides to kill the plants.

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The Canadian government has officially protested the use of agents of chemical warfare like 2,4,5-T. Strangely enough, the government continues to approve of the use of 2,4,5-T in Canada for brush clearing purposes. This is surprising because there have been numerous experiments showing the dangers of 2,4,5-T. There have also been many accidents harming workers and exposed living matter during the production and use of the herbicide. Only a fool would approve the use of the herbicide after examining the evidences which has accumulated about the dangers of exposure to the substance.

Among the findings of the dangers of 2,4,5-T and its contaminant dioxin:

1. They cause cancer.
2. They are mutagenic - they damage the very chromosomes that determine what we are.
3. They are potent teratogens - they cause pregnant women to give birth to deformed children. In fact, tests have shown this material to be 100 thousand, to 1 million times more potent than thalidomide.

Thalidomide was used as a relaxant for pregnant women until it was discovered that women who had used it only once were giving birth to children with no arms and other deformities. Thalidomide is now banned, but 2,4,5-T remains in use.

The catalogue of damages done to the environment, animals and people by 2,4,5-T is very long and growing. Yet the Canadian government continues to suggest it is a herbicide "safe" for

domestic use.

The initial government reaction to a paper presented by the Dene Nation on the damages of 2,4,5-T was not comforting. Agriculture Minister, Eugene Whelan, assured the Dene they had little to worry about. When the Dene made their information on 2,4,5-T public, however, a decision was made to stop the spraying program for this season. The NIB and the Dene Nation are carefully monitoring any government plans to use pesticides and herbicides on Indian lands. The organizations intend to make certain that any similar short-sighted schemes will once again be nipped in the bud. . . .

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GRAY, Dan
AUTHOR

Spraying death and destruction on
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